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REPORT ON GRIPE SESSION OF FIELDMEN
AT BUTTE, MONTANA CONFERENCE

Mr. Earl J. Smith, A & L Division field representative, had been selected to act as Chairman of the Gripe Session.

Mr. Smith opened the meeting by calling on Mr. Henry Bowen to report on the gripes for the Management Division. Mr. Bowen listed the following as gripes which had been turned in for his division:

1. Per diem and mileage - \$6.00 per day and 5¢ a mile insufficient.
2. Field Reports - a. Fieldman should know what action is taken on recommendations.
b. Fieldman should know if reports are being properly prepared - satisfactory or unsatisfactory.
3. Coordination between regional divisional fieldmen lacking - A & L, Finance, Engineering, and Management.

Next to be called on was Mr. W. B. Loving who was asked to list the gripes for the Finance Division. Mr. Loving gave the following:

1. Increase per diem subsistence allowance to \$8.00 - mileage allowance to 8¢ per mile on account of increased costs.
2. Grade level of finance division field personnel - type and responsibility of auditors duties appear to warrant a reclassification to a higher level.
3. After an auditor has demonstrated his ability to perform audits independently without supervision - and has satisfactorily completed several audits he should be entitled to a senior grade rating.
4. After an auditor has made a report in which attention is called to irregularities the auditor should be informed what action has been taken to remedy the situation.
5. Adding machines or calculators for field auditors personal use in performance of duty.
6. Type of personnel in borrowers offices should be improved. This situation might perhaps be improved by better inducements in the form of higher salaries. Recommendation should be made to the boards of directors to acquire competent personnel and a sufficient number of employees.

SEP 14 1948

2-REPORT ON GRIPE SESSION OF FIELDMEN AT BUTTE, MONTANA
CONFERENCE

Mr. W. J. Hauck of the Engineering Division was next with his list of gripes for the Engineering Division:

1. Request all assistance available to get raise in per diem mileage.
2. Support above motion with following resolution:
"Whereas cost of cars has increased 100%
whereas cost of operation has increased 50%
be it resolved that this group request that
mileage be raised to 8¢ per mile."
3. Request that per diem be raised to maximum set by law, and if this maximum is \$6.00 request that every effort be made to increase this to \$8.00.
4. This group favors any assistance available from procurement section to obtain cars at a reduced rate.
5. This group goes on record favoring more expeditious handling of mail within REA.
6. Request that field reports on personnel should be considered more confidential than at present, so that person reported on will not see report.

He stated the above were the major gripes, but he had 6 little ones to report.

1. It takes too long for vouchers to clear. Sometimes they get lost.
2. Slow handling of mail causes itineraries to get in too late.
3. Clarification with respect to relations with G & T co-ops.
4. Work orders approved without field approval.
5. Recommendations on managers disregarded.
6. Mail directed to field engineer at project is not forwarded.

Mr. Earl Smith now read the gripes of the A & L Division which were as follows:

1. Field personnel want an opportunity to return to Washington.
 - a. Provision should be made for each fieldman to return at least once a year.

67030

3-REPORT ON GRIPE SESSION OF FIELDMEN AT BUTTE, MONTANA
CONFERENCE

2. We object to being required to operate a car at a loss. Request something be done.
3. Newsletters should be regular, and WEEKLY, and NEWSY, even if short.
4. We would prefer that criticism of the fieldmen not be included in newsletters mailed to all. Memo should go to the individual concerned.
5. Lately, strictly regional information has been almost deleted from the regional newsletter in favor of material of general nature. This defeats the purpose.
 - a. We recommend propaganda be kept out of the weekly newsletter.
 - b. Generalized material and power use information should be separate.
6. We prefer that all communication and comments sent to field personnel be signed.
7. Any confidential material in field reports should remain confidential and not allowed to "leak" back to the field.
8. We suggest that the Washington office reply promptly to specific requests for information and guidance in field reports and memos.
9. We want follow-up comments on field reports as to action taken or policies for use in future in similar circumstances.
10. We feel examiners should have the opportunity to obtain first hand knowledge of field problems through occasional field trips.
11. We would like important mail in small envelopes, separate from package mail so that it can be forwarded more readily and speedily.
12. We want information about field personnel changes and new assignments with a brief description of their work in the region. This should include all division personnel.

4-REPORT ON GRIPE SESSION OF FIELDMEN AT BUTTE, MONTANA
CONFERENCE

13. We feel that use of time typing field reports, other reports, letters and items required in the work is poor use of time when it could be done more economically with a lower salaried person. There are times when it is necessary to have a "professional" touch. We request permission to hire public stenographers when report writing is in competition with important commitments.
14. When board of directors and people visit Washington we hear they have been in and we do not know what was discussed and what promises have been made them. We would like to know just what you told these people, commitments and promises made.
15. Regional heads should meet at least twice a year with personnel in the region.

